



UNIVERSITY OF
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EXTENSION

Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences

Consumer Highlights

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Lifeline Assistance Link-Up Florida

Get Your Connection to Savings! Save
Up to \$144 a year

**Call the Florida Public Service Commission
1-800-342-3552**

Hearing - or speech-impaired persons
may contact
the
Commission through the Florida Relay
Service at
1-800-955-8771

Dangers Of High-Normal Blood Pressure

People whose blood pressure readings
are at the high end of the normal range
(borderline hypertension) may be at
increased risk of cardiovascular disease,
according to a new study. The findings

reinforce the need for people in this
category to take steps to control blood
pressure and prevent heart problems.

Mayo Clinic Doctors say that, for people
in the high-normal range, it's especially
important to take steps to lower blood
pressure and prevent cardiovascular
disease. These include losing weight if
necessary, maintaining an exercise
program, eating a healthy diet with an
emphasis on fruits, vegetables and low-
fat dairy foods, controlling your intake
of sodium and eliminating tobacco.

If those steps don't help lower your
blood pressure adequately, your doctor
may consider prescribing a medication
designed to lower blood pressure. It's
important to have your blood pressure
checked at least once a year.

Understanding your blood pressure measurement

	Systolic	Diastolic
Optimal*	below 120	lower than 80
Normal	below 130	and lower than 85
High-normal**	130 to 139	or 85 to 89
High (hypertension)***	140 or higher	or 90 or higher

*Optimal means the preferred range in terms of cardiovascular risk.

Unusually low readings should be evaluated.

**High-normal blood pressure may increase your risk of cardiovascular
disease.

***Hypertension diagnosis is based on the average of two or more readings
(high systolic or diastolic readings - or both) taken at each of two or more
visits after an initial screening.

Systolic hypertension is a major risk factor for cardiovascular disease, even
without elevated diastolic pressure, especially in older people.

Hurricane Preparedness **Stay Ahead of Mother Nature**

No matter where you live or what type of severe weather is likely for your area, it is important to be prepared.

Along the Gulf Coast, hurricane season runs from June 1 to November 30, with the peak period occurring in September or October.

Preparedness keeps more people from being hurt and is also a key to food safety during a hurricane and the floods that can accompany it.

Residents of areas subject to hurricanes should keep an adequate supply of food, water and emergency equipment on hand.

This includes enough canned food to last four to five days, a hand operated can opener, battery-powered radio, extra batteries, and emergency cooking equipment like a camp stove with fuel to operate it.

One of the most common questions we receive at the Extension Office deals with food safety, or handling food without power.

If you find yourself without electricity, review the following information to decide which foods are safe to use.

In emergency conditions, the following foods could be kept at room temperature (above 40°F) a few days. Still, discard anything that turns moldy or has an unusual odor or look.

- ? Butter, margarine
- ? Fresh fruits and vegetables
- ? Dried fruits and coconut

- ? Opened jars of peanut butter, jelly relish, taco sauce, barbecue sauce, mustard, ketchup, olives
- ? Hard and processed cheeses
- ? Fruit juices
- ? Fresh herbs and spices
- ? Flour and nuts
- ? Fruit pies
- ? Bread, rolls, cakes and muffins

Discard the following foods if kept over two hours above 40°F.

- Raw or cooked meat, poultry and seafood
- Milk or cream, yogurt, soft cheese
- Cooked pasta, pasta salads
- Custard, chiffon or cheese pies
- Fresh eggs, egg substitutes
- Meat-topped pizza, lunchmeats
- Casseroles, stews or soups
- Mayonnaise and tartar sauce
- Refrigerator and cookie doughs
- Cream-filled pastries

For detailed information on this subject contact your local extension office or call the USDA hotline.

POWERS'S OUT

Your freezer:

Without power, a full upright or chest freezer will keep everything frozen for about 2 days. A half-full freezer will keep food frozen for 1 day.

If power will be coming back on fairly soon, you can make the food last longer by keeping the door shut as much as possible.

If power will be off for an extended period, take foods to friends' freezers, locate a commercial freezer or use dry ice.

Your refrigerator-freezer combination

Without power, the refrigerator section will keep food cool-4-6 hours depending on the kitchen temperature.

A full, well-functioning freezer unit should keep food frozen for 2 days. A half-full freezer unit should keep things frozen about 1 day.

Block ice can keep food on the refrigerator shelves cooler. Dry ice can be added to the freezer unit. You can't touch dry ice and you shouldn't breathe the fumes, so follow handling directions carefully.

Family and Consumer Sciences
Hotline – August 2002

Fruits and Veggies Protect Your Heart

Chalk up more evidence for fruits and vegetables. Eating them decreases the risk of stroke and death from heart disease, according to data from nearly 10,000 adults enrolled in the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey Epidemiologic Follow-up Study.

Even after taking risk factors into account, participants who ate three or more fruits and vegetables a day had 27% fewer strokes over 19 years compared to those who ate less than one a day. They were also 42% less likely to die from a stroke, about 25% less likely to die from heart disease and 15% less likely to die from all causes.

This large study offers additional evidence of the overall benefits of fruits

and vegetables, which may be partly due to lowering blood pressure. The combination of nutrients in these foods (including potassium, folate and antioxidants) may have a synergistic effect, suggest the researchers.

Environmental Nutrition
August 2002

Is Your Home Future-Ready?

Digital home entertainment systems, high-speed Internet access and computer networking are today's top home technologies. According to the Leviton Institute, there are five categories you should look at to determine how future-ready your home is. By answering the following questions, you can assess how your home rates as a "connected home."

1) Home Entertainment

Do you have:

- Jacks throughout your home for video, high speed Internet and computer networking?
- Satellite TV?
- Multi-room in-wall wiring that drives in-wall or in-ceiling audio loudspeakers for home theater, music or paging/intercom functions?

2) Communications

Do you have:

- Telephone jacks throughout your home?
- A multi-line phone system that supports multiple extensions?
- An intercom system to page and speak to other household members.

3) Computer Networking and Internet Sharing

Do you have:

- A home area network (HAN) that lets you share information and peripherals with other family members?
- A broadband Internet connection such as a DSL, cable modem or direct broadcast satellite?

4) Home Security

Do you have:

- A home security system that sounds an alarm and reports to a central station?
- A closed circuit television system that distributes video signals from surveillance cameras in and around your home?

5) Comfort and Convenience

Do you have:

- A multi-room lighting control system that coordinates programmed lighting scenes?
- A home automation system that controls lights, appliances, heating, cooling and your security system?
- Energy management controls integrated with your home automation system to maximize energy efficiency?
- Remote controls for motorized window coverings?

v Extra Credit — Structured Cabling

- Do you have special purpose jacks/outlets connected by high performance in-wall wires and cables to a central distribution box?

If you answered yes to the "extra credit" structured cabling category, your home

is well out-fitted for almost all future technologies. Answering "yes" to all questions also means your home will command a higher resale value should you wish to sell it.

Leviton Institute Newsletter
2002

Gardener's Corner

Thanks to recent rains, local landscapes and gardens are looking better. There is still plenty of time to enjoy some late summer and fall gardening.

September Tips

- ? Divide and transplant crowded daylily and amaryllis bulbs.
- ? Fertilize St. Augustine lawns for the last time of the season.
- ? Transplant flowering perennials.
- ? Prepare beds and get ready for establishing winter flowers. Nurseries and garden centers will begin offering these cool season annuals and perennials this month.
- ? Plant a winter vegetable garden. The first planting of most cool season vegetables can be made this month. Most can be started by direct seeding, while others can be established by transplanting bedding plants. Check garden supply outlets for plants of onions, broccoli, cabbage, collards, lettuce and cauliflower.

Practice Sanitation in the Garden

Most warm season vegetable gardens have ended production and are in decline at this time of year. Don't allow weeds to go to seed or old diseased vegetable plants to remain standing.

Pest Watch

Insect and disease pressure increases during the season and the potential for plant damage is greatest in late summer. Check the lawn and landscape weekly in order to detect and control damaging pests before they become serious. Some specific pests to watch for in September include:

- | Chinch bugs in St. Augustine lawns.
- | Spittlebugs in centipede lawns.
- | Leaf eating caterpillars on hibiscus.
- | Sod webworm and mole cricket infestations in any kind of lawn grass.
- | Brown patch disease in St. Augustine and centipedegrass.
- | Tea scale on camellias and hollies.
- | Azalea defoliator caterpillar on azaleas.

Help to Control Invasive Plants

Several species of exotic invasive plants threaten to crowd out our native vegetation. This could have far reaching effects, including the reduction of loss of native wildlife species.

The popcorn tree, also known as the Chinese tallow tree appears to be the most immediate threat. This aggressive, weedy tree is crowding out native vegetation in south Alabama and is already being commonly seen in Santa Rosa County.

Individual homeowners can help prevent the tallow tree from taking over by killing any that are found on their property.

The Santa Rosa County Extension office has a new four page publication containing specific information for use in identifying and controlling this awful plant. Call or drop by for a copy.

The University of Florida maintains a website with much information about this and other invasive plants. Go to <http://aquat1.ifas.ufl.edu>. There is a list of 12 terrestrial and 24 aquatic invasives.

- **Dr Ed Gilman** from the University of Florida has developed a new website entitled "Planting Trees in the Landscape" which is available at <http://hort.ifas.ufl.edu/woody/planting>.

The website contains information on tree selection, nursery stock, transportation, planting, establishment and pruning.

- Friday and Saturday evenings are a time for music and home grown food in Chumuckla. Check this site to learn more.

www.farmersopry.com

Dan Mullins
Horticulture Agent



Recipes

Chicken Fajita Salad

This is an attractive and zesty meal all in one dish. It's full of veggies and chicken and loaded with flavor. A quick fix for a long day. If desired top with shredded cheese and tortilla chips.

Prep time: approx. 10 minutes. Cook time approx. 30 minutes. Ready in: approx. 40 minutes.

Makes 4 to 6 servings.

- 2 skinless boneless chicken breast halves
- 1 (1.27 oz.) packet dry fajita seasoning mix
- 1 (15 oz.) can black beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 (11 oz.) can Mexican-style corn
- ½ jar salsa
- 1 (10 oz.) pkg. mixed greens
- 1 onion chopped
- 1 tomato, cut into wedges

Rub the chicken with ½ fajita seasonings. Grill or pan fry until cooked through, let cool then chop.

In a large saucepan, mix beans, corn, salsa and other ½ of fajita seasoning. Heat over medium heat until warm.

Prepare the salad by tossing the greens, onion and tomato. Top salad with chicken and dress with the bean/corn mixture. If desired top with shredded cheese and tortilla chips.



All-Day Crockpot Beef

- 1 ½ pounds Beef, *stew or roast beef
- ½ tsp. black pepper
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- ½ pkg. onion soup mix
- 2 tsp. Worcestershire sauce
- 1 tsp A-1 steak sauce
- 3 large carrots, sliced
- 2 large celery stalks, sliced
- 1 medium green bell pepper, chopped
- 1 medium onion
- ½ c. water
- ½ c. tomato juice
- *Use any cut of beef roast desired.

Cut beef into serving-size portions. Brown beef in a bit of vegetable oil, in a large skillet. Meanwhile, slice onion and separate into rings. Dice the peeled carrots, dice the celery and slice the peppers into thin strips or circles. Place these into the bottom of the crockpot. Sprinkle the beef pieces with fresh ground black pepper, minced garlic and the onion soup mix. Place on top of the vegetables. Mix the steak sauce and Worcestershire sauce in a small bowl with about ½ cup water and ½ cup tomato juice. Pour this over the meat. Turn the crockpot to high for 30 minutes, then turn to low, cover and cook for 7-9 hours.

Freezer directions:

Cut and brown beef as directed above, then cool. Place beef into a large zip baggie. Add all other ingredients to baggie, label and freeze for up to six months. The day before you wish to cook this, remove from freezer and thaw overnight in refrigerator, then place into crockpot next morning and cook as directed above.

Nutrition Information: Per Serving: 332: Calories, 22 g Total Fat, 22 g Protein, 10 g Carbohydrate; 76 mg Cholesterol 404 mg Sodium; 3 g Fiber

The use of trade name in this publication is solely for the purpose of providing specific information. It is not a guarantee, warranty, or endorsement of the product names and does not signify that they are approved to the exclusion of others.

Sincerely,

Linda K. Bowman, R.D., L.D.
Extension Agent IV
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LKB:etc